

# Exhibit 51



## Permanent Observer Mission of The State of Palestine to the United Nations New York

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### 17 August 2020 – Israeli Colonization and Human Rights Violations in Palestine

17 AUGUST 2020 BY PALESTINE AT THE UN

Excellency,

In light of recent developments, I must write once more to draw the international community's attention to the countless crimes that continue to be perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in Occupied Palestine. With absolute impunity, Israel carries on with its illegal colonization and annexation measures in our land and with its repression of the Palestinian people through measures of collective punishment, dispossession, displacement and other violations of their rights. That the status quo is unsustainable and highly volatile is an assessment the international community has long agreed on.

We are thus compelled to reiterate: Israel's "suspension" of plans to annex parts of the West Bank should neither be cause for relief, nor applause, by the international community. It is perverse to reward "not committing the crime of annexation", when respect for the law is obligatory upon all and, when in reality, the crime is being committed as we speak. This is reflected not only in the occupying Power's ongoing rhetoric and declarations of intent, most vocally by the Israeli Prime Minister, but by the occupying Power's actions on the ground, which indicate no sign of halting and reversing the seizure and colonization of Palestinian land, as repeatedly demanded by the international community, including the Security Council, most recently in its resolution 2334 (2016), and as obligated by international law.

What was stressed in the Security Council on 21 July in this regard bears repeating, "**Refraining from de jure annexation must of course carry no reward; avoidance of criminality is normative not prize-worthy**". (Briefing by Daniel Levy)

Those who believe otherwise are mistaken and fail to understand that stopping colonization and annexation is not an end in itself. Rather it is a primary condition for bringing an end to this illegal occupation and realizing Palestinian self-determination, independence and sovereignty in their land, two central pillars for a just solution that can ultimately restore the rights of the Palestinian people, including the Palestine refugees, and serve as the cornerstone for true peace and security in our region.

This conviction has long been at the core of the international consensus on the matter, based on international law and recognition of the root of this conflict – the denial of an entire people, the Palestinian people, of their human, national and territorial rights – and what it will take to justly and sustainably resolve it. Occupation and colonization, oppression and apartheid must never be normalized.

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The fact that Israel carries on with its colonization schemes in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem – systematically establishing facts on the ground blatantly aimed at annexing our territory, in grave breach of international law and rejection of the international consensus, based on international law and as enshrined in the relevant UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative – should be cause for concern and action, not complacency or complicity. Just a brief look at the developments of the past week since our last letter reaffirm this stark reality.

Absent accountability, Israel has forged ahead with its settlement plans in the so-called 'E-1' area to the east of Occupied East Jerusalem, seeking to build thousands of settlement units on the lands of al-Tur, Anata, al-Eizariya, Abu Dis and Hizma villages. If implemented, such measures would completely sever the eastern area of Jerusalem from its natural Palestinian environs; encircle and besiege these areas, where approximately 1 million Palestinians live and which constitute the only significant land reserve they have economic and urban development, with a ring of illegal settlements; and cut off the northern and southern West Bank. Such actions threaten the contiguity of the Palestinian State and the viability of the two-State solution on the pre-1967 borders and must be stopped.

These illegal actions have been accompanied by more demolition of Palestinian homes, displacing Palestinian families and seizing their lands. In just one example, on 10 August, occupying forces demolished three Palestinian homes and a water tank used by village residents for drinking and watering crops in the areas of Jenin and Bethlehem. In Occupied East Jerusalem, three Palestinian brothers and their families were rendered homeless after the occupation authorities demolished their three-apartment building in the Silwan neighborhood under the pretext of construction without permit. In the Sheikh Jarrah area of the City, two other Palestinian families were ordered to tear down their homes also for lack of permit, or otherwise be forced to pay high costs if the demolition was undertaken by the occupation authorities. These neighborhoods have been systematically and fiercely targeted by the occupation and so many other families are threatened by demolition orders and the revocation of residency rights.

Also, 20 Palestinian families in the northern village of Farasin have received demolition orders. This includes the Amarnah family, who have lived in a cave home for over a year after repeatedly failing to receive permits to build a home in Farasin. Now, this cruel occupation wants to evict Ahmed Amarnah and his family, including a pregnant wife and young daughter, from their home because it has "allocated" this land for the construction of more illegal settlements. If not stopped, this family will be tragically added to the thousands of Palestinians rendered homeless and forcibly transferred from their lands by the Israeli occupation, which continues apace with its decades-long policy of displacing the Palestinian people from their land and replacing them with Israeli settlers, in other words ethnic cleansing.

At the same time, the Israeli occupying forces have continued their violent military raids of Palestinian cities, towns, villages and refugee camps, causing more civilian casualties. This includes the murder of a young woman in Jenin on Friday, 7 August. Dalia Samoudi, age 23 and a mother of two young children, was shot and killed inside her home as she ran to close the window to protect her children from the tear gas and ammunition being shot by Israeli

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Israel also continues to launch airstrikes at the Gaza Strip, further terrorizing and traumatizing the 2 million Palestinians besieged there by Israel's illegal and medieval blockade. Israeli helicopter gunships and tanks attacked several sites in Gaza early on 12 August, causing destruction to infrastructure, including an UNRWA school, and agricultural lands. These strikes and repeated threats by Israeli officials for further attacks on Gaza are escalating tensions and deepening the fears of the civilian population of yet another barbaric military aggression by the occupying Power.

We urgently appeal to the international community to assume its responsibilities towards this unlawful situation and protracted protection crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The Security Council and General Assembly must uphold their Charter duties and all States must uphold their legal, political and moral obligations to bring an end to this injustice. That begins with holding Israel accountable for its crimes against the Palestinian people, foremost the violation of their right to self-determination through the continued imposition of this illegal occupation.

As repeatedly demanded by the international community, the Israeli occupation must be brought to an end and the Palestinian people must realize their right to self-determination and independence in their State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and all other of their inalienable rights, including to return. This is the key to justice, to an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to the peace and security long sought in the Middle East.

This letter is in follow-up to our 691 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 6 August 2020 (A/ES-10/xxx-S/2020/xxx) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have this letter distributed as an official document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Dr. Riyad Mansour

Minister, Permanent Observer

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